

VZCZCXRO2681  
RR RUEHAST RUEHBI RUEHDBU RUEHLH RUEHNEH RUEHPW  
DE RUEHCI #0153 1590444  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 080444Z JUN 09  
FM AMCONSUL KOLKATA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2379  
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHINGTON DC  
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC  
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC  
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA 0001  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC  
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC  
RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE  
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 2924

UNCLAS KOLKATA 000153

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

STATE PASS TO NSF FOR INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS  
STATE PASS TO USAID  
HHS PASS TO OGHA (KULIKOWSKI/CUMMINGS)  
STATE FOR OES/PCI, OES/IHB AND SCA/INS  
STATE FOR STAS AND AIAG (REED-ROWE)  
HHS FOR NIH/FIC (GLASS/MAMPILLY/HANDLEY)  
HHS FOR FDA (LUMPKIN/VALDEZ)  
HHS FOR CDC (BLOUNT/COX)  
USDA FOR APHIS (FLEMING/BURLESON)  
USDA FOR FAS (RIKER/BEAN)  
NEW DELHI FOR FAS/APHIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAGR](#) [SENV](#) [CASC](#) [PGOV](#) [AMED](#) [KFLU](#) [IN](#) [BD](#)

SUBJECT: FRESH AVIAN INFLUENZA OUTBREAK IN WEST BENGAL

11. (SBU) On May 27, the GOI's central Ministry of Agriculture confirmed a new outbreak of avian influenza among poultry at Hemtabad in the North Dinajpur district of West Bengal. Hemtabad is located about 490 KM north of Kolkata and 20 KM from the border with Bangladesh. Contacts in West Bengal's state Animal Resources Development (ARD) Department told PolFSN that they sent samples collected from Hemtabad to the GOI's High Security Animal Disease Laboratory, which confirmed the H5N1 strain of the virus. Government officials started culling on May 29 and as of May 31 approximately 25,000 chickens had been culled. ARD completed culling and sanitization on June 2.

12. (SBU) ARD contacts confirmed media reports that people resisted attempts to cull chickens in a few villages. According to the ARD Department, this was to protest the fact that government officials were not paying compensation at the time the villagers were handing over their poultry. According to the ARD, villagers started to cooperate after officials started making spot payment of Rs. 50 (USD 1) per layer and Rs 40 (USD 0.8) per broiler. ARD contacts pointed out that in the past, H5N1 has always been detected in the cooler months between November and March.

Comment

13. (SBU) GOWB officials cannot explain why the latest outbreak has occurred in warm weather and are concerned that more resources will need to be devoted to avian influenza response. Another factor they cannot explain is the low mortality rates (20 chickens dying out of 1,200 in 72 hours in backyard poultries). Despite these anomalies, the state response seems to be in line with extraordinary precautions associated with standardized H5N1 containment measures.

PAYNE